

Amendments to the Drawings:

Attached hereto are three (3) Replacement drawing sheets encompassing FIGS. 1-4, 9-12 and 17-20. The attached drawing sheets include changes to FIGS. 1, 3, 9, 11, 17 and 19. Please replace the drawing sheets including FIGS. 1-4, 9-12 and 17-20 presently on file with the attached Replacement sheets. No new matter has been added.

Attachments: Three (3) Replacement Drawing Sheets (FIGS. 1-4, 9-12 and 17-20)

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

The claims are 14-17, 20-22 and 24, with claims 18, 19, 23, and 25-27 having been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner as directed to a non-elected species. Claim 14 has been amended to more clearly define the invention. Support for the amendments to claim 14 may be found, *inter alia*, in FIGS. 1-16 of the specification as filed. No new matter has been added.

The Examiner objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In particular, it was the Examiner's position that the "first direction" recited in independent claim 14 must be shown in a drawing.

In response, Applicant submits herewith three (3) sheets of replacement drawings encompassing FIGS. 1-4, 9-12 and 17-20. The attached drawing sheets include changes to FIGS. 1, 3, 9, 11, 17 and 19. In particular, FIGS. 1, 3, 9, 11, 17 and 19 have been amended to show the "first direction" as recited in claim 14,

which has been indicated with reference numeral 100. The specification has been amended at the paragraph bridging pages 5 and 6 to include reference numeral 100. Support for the amendments to the drawings may be found, *inter alia*, in claim 1 as filed and in the specification as filed at page 6, lines 3-4. No new matter has been introduced.

In view of the foregoing amendments to the drawings, it is believed that the Examiner's objections to the drawings are overcome and accordingly Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections to the drawings on this basis.

Claims 14 and 16-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,859,979 to *Egger*. The remaining claims under consideration by the Examiner were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Egger* alone (claims 15, 20 and 21) or further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,102,311 to *Martin* (claim 22 and 24). Essentially the Examiner's position was that *Egger et al.* discloses the hinge recited in the claims except for features which are considered either within the skill of the art or taught by secondary reference to *Martin et al.*

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth in claim 14, Applicant's invention provides a furniture hinge including a fixing arm for fixing to a piece of furniture, means for fixing to a door of the piece of furniture, incorporating a cup, first and second rockers, forming an articulated quadrilateral and joining the fixing arm to the cup so as to allow reciprocal pivoting thereof, a connection element fixed to the first rocker, and damping means of the reciprocal pivoting. The damping means includes a slider controlled in translation by the connection element and suitable to translate according to a first direction corresponding to a pivoting of the hinge. The slider cooperates with kinematic means for motion conversion suitable to convert a translation motion of the slider into a damping pivoting motion.

The damping means include a housing separate from the cup and enclosing the slider. The housing includes a lid element separate from the cup and serving to guide the movement of the slider. The damping means further includes damping moving elements and the kinetic means for motion conversion and are provided with fast connection means to the cup so that the slider and the damping moving elements are suitable to be assembled with one another with the housing so that the damping means form a single element suitable to be fixed to one end of the cup in a single operation.

In this way, Applicant's invention provides a furniture hinge which has an alternative damping and braking device with respect to those known previously, which ensures improved efficiency during the closing and/or opening operation of the doors or other parts of the piece of furniture without variations to the overall dimensions of standard hinges. With Applicant's furniture hinge arrangement, a modular structure is provided which considerably facilitates the construction and final assembly and allows optimization of the use of production lines.

None of the cited references discloses or suggests a furniture hinge including damping means that include a housing separate from a cup enclosing a slider, damping moving elements, and kinematic means for motion conversion and that are provided with fast connection means to the cup so that the slider and the damping moving elements are suitable to be assembled with one another with the housing so that the damping means form a single element suitable to be fixed to one end of the cup in a single operation. Moreover, none of cited references discloses or suggests such a furniture hinge wherein the housing includes a lid element separate from the cup and serving to guide the movement of the slider as recited in amended claim 14.

The primary reference to *Egger et al.* discloses a hinge that

lacks a damping means with a housing that is separate from the cup that encloses the slider, damping moving elements and kinematic means for motion conversion. The housing of the damping device as recited in amended claim 14 is separate from the cup and can be mounted thereupon as one unit.

In contrast, the damping device of the hinge in *Egger et al.* has only a base (6 in FIG. 4) that is screwed into the cup (5 in FIG. 4) for housing the slider, damping moving elements and kinematic means for translating motion. Thus, the damping device of *Egger et al.* cannot exist separately as a single element as Applicant's damping device as recited in claim 14 can.

Moreover, the sliding element according to *Egger et al.* is not guided by a *lid element separate from said cup*, as recited in Applicant's amended claim 14. Rather, the sliding element in *Egger et al.* is guided by the stepped profile of the opening of the hinge cup 5 itself, as clearly shown in FIG. 5 of *Egger et al.*

The advantage of the feature of guiding the slider with a lid element separate from the cup, as recited in amended claim 14, is that it dispenses with the need for a specific profile of the opening in the lower surface of the hinge cup, instead

allowing the damping device as recited in Applicant's claim 14 to be attached to any conventional hinge cup.

The secondary reference to *Martin et al.* has been considered but is believed to be no more relevant. *Martin et al.* simply discloses a unitary, flexible plastic tie-strap adapted to be looped upon itself in adjusted self-locking relation. There is no disclosure or suggestion of a damping means including a housing separate from a cup incorporated in a means for fixing to a door of a piece of furniture, damping moving elements and kinematic means for motion conversions as recited in Applicant's claim 14.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 14, together with claim 15-17, 20-22 and 24, which depend directly or indirectly thereon, contain patentable or unobvious subject matter.

In summary, independent claim 14 has been amended to more clearly define the invention. Drawings FIGS. 1, 3, 9, 11, 17 and 19 have been amended to show the "first direction" recited in the claims and the specification has been amended accordingly. No new matter has been added.

19 have been amended to show the "first direction" recited in the claims and the specification has been amended accordingly. No new matter has been added.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosure(s): Three (3) Replacement Drawing Sheets (FIGS. 1-4, 9-12 and 17-20)

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

Express Mail No. : EM 285 933 377 US

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I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10, on the date indicated above, and is addressed to Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.


Amy Klein

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